10: Viski E-4, 5 (no date) 1932 EC1 Hungary EC1

finds utterance through queer, musical instruments and other methodes of expression . . . 533

Minstrelsy is one of the most ancient Hungarian customs and is still practised in some 170 Hungarian villages, especially in Transdanubia and in a few places amongst the most eastern tribe of the Magyars, that is amongst the Szeklers. The many, to-day unintelligible words, variations, choruses and references to obsolete versions have often puzzled science, and will surely do so even more frequently in the future. Mysterious in itself is the Hungarian word for minstrel : «regös», which is the name of the performer ; the word «regölés» means the act of minstrelsy. These are obsolete words; the minstrels themselves do not know their meaning. In order to understand the custom, we must know its origin, though one or two of our readers may find this explanation somewhat lengthy and uninteresting.

The word «regös» is derived from the same root as the Hungarian word «rejt» which means to hide something, and the «regös» is nothing but a person who «hides something». To this day Hungarians call a person who falls into trance a person who «rejtezik» that is «hides». Wonderful things are still told about persons who «hide», i. e. fall into a trance. They are supposed to be able to foretell the future, and they are considered especially capable of communicating with the dead, from whom they bring messages and whose wishes they interpret. They are supposed to travel through Heaven and talk to its inhabitants, — not merely to acquaintances, who have just died, but to such distinguished souls as Abraham of the Old Testament. A Szekler girl described her journey to Heaven, the people she had met, and the heavenly situation in general as she had seen it in her trance. These «dead-alive» people are highly esteemed even to-day, and were more so in the past. John Arany, the famous Hungarian epic poet, who knew the Great Hungarian Plain like no one else, was 787 828 787 538